

Arena/pool plans revealed at council

Most applaud rollout, critics keep low profile

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

An architectural presentation of Westmount's long-awaited arena/pool project generated applause from the audience of some 60 residents and staff attending the city council meeting April 6 as well as a wide range of questions.

Several critics of the project were present but silent.

Questions were asked about parking, financing, extending the second rink to full NHL-size, finding a way to supplement a telephone poll/survey, and changing the format of the upcoming public information sessions that will take the form of break-out, round-table meetings.

Unveiled were preliminary designs for the \$30-million project, to be built to the silver standard of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). The plan contains two "full-size" rinks (200 and 185

feet respectively) and two pools below grade but above an underground garage for 90 cars. A central hub at ground level shows offices, a café, multipurpose room, pro shop and an enlarged teen centre.

"It's going to be very exciting," Mayor Karin Marks declared. She then proceeded to explain the intention of the city to post up-to-date data on its website and provide three information sessions for residents.

Fitting all the elements into a tight space and oriented to take advantage of light qualities and direct sun proved challenging and interesting, said Lemay consortium architects Georges Bulette and Pierre Leclerc.

"We want to maximize green space, limit traffic onsite, provide good security, use natural light, preserve visual aspects of the parks and respect the height of nearby residential buildings," Leclerc explained. *continued on p. 8*

Honours founder helps celebrate



At the Vin d'honneur held April 7 at Victoria Hall, former mayor May Cutler (right), who launched Westmount's civic honours in 1990, speaks with Florence Richler, widow of author Mordecai Richler, one of this year's recipients. With them is former city councillor Peter Duffield who presented Richler's achievements during the event which was emceed by Richard Pound. Others honoured posthumously were A.Y. Jackson, Arnold Heeney and Jessie Boyd Scriver.

How many should go to Whistler?

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Westmount's representation at the June annual conference of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities in Whistler, BC, generated somewhat equivalent mileage at the council meeting April 6.

The topic of how many councillors should attend the same distant meeting stemmed from an agenda item to send three to the event and one to the Green Cities Conference in Portland, Oregon.

While total costs had been presented on

the agenda at \$19,510, they were quickly amended to \$9,100.

"I would like [council to adopt] a policy that for faraway meetings we send only one [from council] and one staff," said city councillor Patrick Martin.

City councillor Cynthia Lulham would be the lone representative at the Green Cities meeting, from April 18 to 21. Those going to Whistler were John de Castell, Nicole Forbes and Lulham, as well as Mayor Karin Marks whose expenses, it was explained, *continued on p. 18*



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À vous la parole!

Le Conseil de Ville invite les résidents de la ville de Westmount à des sessions publiques d'information concernant le projet de rénovation Aréna/piscine. Les plans préliminaires seront présentés et le public pourra adresser ses questions aux experts.

le samedi, le 18 avril, 2009, à midi

ou

le mardi, 21 avril, 2009, à 19h

Au Victoria Hall

(4626, rue Sherbrooke Ouest)

Les résidents sont invités à assister à l'une ou l'autre des sessions, car la même information sera présentée à chaque rencontre. Les résidents pourront se préparer en consultant le matériel disponible sur le site de la Ville, www.westmount.org, ainsi que la documentation technique à la bibliothèque et à l'Hôtel de Ville. Les suggestions pertinentes recueillies lors de ces sessions seront ajoutées à la trousse d'information qui sera envoyée par la suite aux résidents vers la mi-mai.

Have Your Say!

City Council is inviting Westmount residents to attend an information session on the Arena/Pool Project. Preliminary plans will be shown and questions will be answered by experts.

Saturday, April 18, 2009, at 12 pm

or

Tuesday, April 21, 2009, at 7 pm

At Victoria Hall

(4626 Sherbrooke Street W.)

Residents are invited to attend either session, as the same presentation will be made at each meeting. Residents can prepare by consulting material available on www.westmount.org. Technical documentation is also available at the Library and City Hall. Valuable input from residents will be included in the information package to be sent to residents by mid-May.



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Green Party leader visits The Study



Elizabeth May (centre), leader of the Green Party of Canada with, from left, Corinne Bertoia and Jessica Magonet, both grade 11 students at The Study.

BY ISAAC OLSON

Taking jabs at Prime Minister Stephen Harper's environmental policy and touting President Barack Obama's ambition to clean up the planet, Elizabeth May, the Green Party of Canada's leader, discussed the earth's future during a student-led conference hosted by The Study on April 3.

"When enough people care, get in-

involved and demand change. Change will happen," said May. "We have to change."

Dubbed "Green vs. Greed: Poverty in a Perishing Planet," the conference was initiated by two environmentally-driven grade 11 students, Corinne Bertoia and Jessica Magonet. They wanted to raise awareness about the direct link between the planet's dwindling re- sources and poverty, while *continued on p. 14*

Westmount cancer patient getting AB blood donors, needs more

A single Westmount mother with advanced ovarian cancer is searching for AB blood donors so she can receive a new treatment that could extend her life.

The woman – who wants to remain anonymous – and her supporters have already assembled a list of potential donors "almost" equal to their 35-person target. This total has a good chance of garnering the five matches needed to provide the necessary blood. Candidates' screening begins next week at the Royal Victoria Hospital.

If donors qualify, they would be flown to Florida – all expenses paid – for more testing and hopefully to give the actual blood needed during treatment.

"People have been phenomenal," she told the *Independent*. "I started with an appeal to 12 people on Facebook and it grew from there. I've never seen results like this, and I've been involved in PR and communications for years."

Candidates should be between 18 and 35. People with AB negative blood are ideal candidates, but AB positive blood can also be used in some instances. Approximately 1 percent of the general population has AB negative blood, with 3 percent having

AB positive.

If all goes well, the woman will soon be off to Florida to take part in a phase 1 FDA-approved clinical trial, a promising study that may well expand the scope of available cancer therapies.

There is no guarantee that the current list will provide enough matching donors. To get involved, please contact Eliza, the campaign's principal organizer, at abdonors@gmail.com.



Brian Gans
Notary
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briangans@briangans.com

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Letters to the Editor

VIC VILLAGE: IN APPRECIATION

I have had a shop on Victoria Ave. for nearly three years now, and yes, it is true, if you blink, you will miss it.

On many occasions I have asked myself exactly what am I doing. Am I making *any* of the right choices? I know there are times when others may not have understood them. Sometimes I have been sure of myself, oftentimes I have not. And there have indeed been moments when I would have very much liked to give in.

But whenever I have felt, or rather, when I feel this way, I look outside and I see the streetscape. I see the people who are a part of it. I am reminded that between Sherbrooke and de Maisonneuve, every cupcake decorated, every flower's stem wired, every coffee bean ground and every bead strung on a necklace is done by hand...

Every item selected by a retailer here on Victoria Ave. is chosen not just because someone might purchase it, but because that someone might appreciate or enjoy it. I am reminded that every parcel delivered to my door is handled by the same person, and when that person is away or on another route, minor chaos ensues.

I am reminded that there are businesses on this avenue that have been here since before I was born. I truly have no excuse not to succeed.

It is these very businesses which have also been so kind to me. I have been lent every imaginable object. I have been lis-

tened to while I rant. I have been given meaningful advice and, most importantly, much needed encouragement.

And so, as I am always appreciative of those who shop at my store, it is also to those businesses and individuals who make this street all it is that I am much indebted and truly grateful.

I thank them.

STELLA MINDORFF
PURE ÉCOLOGIQUE
VICTORIA AVE.

FEET? METERS? WHATEVER!

In the April 7 issue cover article on the arena, I read "The plan includes a 25-foot pool of eight lanes..." I think you mean "meters" because a 25-foot pool would be a kiddie pool.

I'm hoping it's meters and not yards because the current pool is 25 yards, which requires record keeping for both measures.

GARY PERLMAN
WESTMOUNT AVE.

Editor's Note: You're right. It should have read "meters." We regret the error.

TRAFFIC IS THE CONCERN

The debate about the Westmount arena renewal centres on one question of major social importance for all of Westmount: traffic.

What is the difference between a new arena with 1½ hockey rinks, and one with two big ones? A more than doubling of de-

mand for car parking (60 spaces to 150). That is why council has decided that the two-rink option must have underground parking for 90 vehicles.

The already busy Landsowne/St. Catherine intersection is the only four-way arterial crossing of its kind in the area, streaming east-west and north-south traffic.

Now larger urban patterns threaten to severely congest the intersection and its feeder streets. Urban planner Jason Prince estimates that with the Superhospital this area of Westmount, along with St. Henri, can expect an *extra one million car visits per year*. And one should add to that figure, the immense increase in auto traffic if the Turcot project goes ahead as planned.

Westmount, in my opinion, should not be adding auto traffic to this area for the sake of 33 percent more ice space. More importantly, Westmount - in the years ahead - will find itself in an alliance with St. Henri in an effort to stop the car madness of provincial planners.

For neighbourhood sustainability, we should stick to 1½ rinks. And, thinking ahead, we should not be seen as selfishly compounding the local traffic problem if we genuinely want to work with others for a rational transport policy in Montreal.

PATRICK BARNARD
MELVILLE AVE.

FINANCES FIRST, DECISIONS SECOND

The estimated cost of the arena/pool renewal project has now ballooned to \$30 million and if the project follows in the historical footsteps of some other ambitious public works projects in Montreal, the possibility of future cost overruns has to be considered.

Before Westmount taxpayers can make an informed decision whether to approve or disapprove of the arena/pool project as presently planned, the undertaking's financial aspects need to be fully discussed, including:

- The allowance for contingencies within the estimated \$30-million cost,
- The portion of cost to be covered by firmly guaranteed grants and donations,

- A detailed account of how Westmount envisages financing the balance of costs for the project,
- The long-term impact on municipal taxes, also taking into consideration possible needs of other, more essential high-cost renewal projects, such as maintenance of the aging water distribution system.

Until Westmount became merged with Montreal, projects were typically financed on a prudent, pay-as-you go basis and any new debt financing following the demerger should generally be directed toward meeting essential needs.

Based on the public disclosure of the financial information above and considering the significant cost element of discretionary improvements included in the present plan, the project's go-head should require approval by a majority of Westmount taxpayers in a formal referendum.

JOHN D. DOREY
VICTORIA AVE.

ARENA: MONEY, CONGESTION, TAXES

Regarding the "Arena Renewal Project", how do the mayor and her council justify an extravagant sports complex in these dire economic times which are affecting all citizens? Has anyone on this council any business sense or given consideration to the people who are struggling to make ends meet? Have they thought about the extra taxes a luxury project will require?

Isn't this the same council that spent so much money on a plastic grass project nobody wanted?

How many hundreds of thousands of dollars have already been spent on this extravagant, oversize sports complex that is completely out of sync with our lovely green space park and which will drastically increase congestion in the area and its surrounding streets?

LARRY KLEPPER
ST. CATHERINE ST.

Editor's note: To the best of our knowledge, approximately \$400,000 has been spent on the arena to date.

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

We are Westmount.

EDITOR:
David Price 514.935.4537

EDITORIAL COORDINATOR:
Kristin McNeill 514.223.3578
indie@westmountindependent.com

CHIEF REPORTER:
Laureen Sweeney
laureen@westmountindependent.com

ADVERTISING CONSULTANT:
Arleen Candiotti 514.223.3567
advertising@westmountindependent.com

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Civic Alert

Arena: Till the full story is heard, it's all preliminary

BY DON WEDGE



Gasps from the audience greeted architect Pierre Leclerc as he unrolled the diagrams of the proposed arena/pool plan. Taxpayers saw at last a manifestation of a 10-year-old arena/pool dream. Momentarily forgotten among the excitement was that these were only preliminary drawings.

The April 6 city council meeting was packed with a large contingent of recreation users and many others anxious to see some results. Nick Matossian – an old-timer both as a hockey player and former councillor – recalled that the project had begun in 1999 with visits by the Peter Trent council to other facilities.

The euphoric hockey crowd seemed to submerge the swimmers. Perhaps they were dazzled by the ingenuity of the designs.

Some striking features were promised: shoe-horning the extra rink into the site, entrances on four sides, the walkways (a little like the central corridor introduced in the library's reconstruction) and the daylight between facilities.

But again a word of caution: it is only the architects' preliminary designs. In reality, the whole project has many hurdles to clear.

Besides, there is a startling lack of information on which citizens can make sound decisions. It begins with finance. The estimate went from \$19 million to \$25 million – and now \$30 million. But the real issue is how much help will come from other sources. How much will be called for in local taxes?

Do Westmounters have a taste for nearly doubling the debt that Montreal loaded on us during the forced merger

and pushing it up to \$65 million or higher? MNA Jacques Chagnon was clear on the chances of substantial government funding: "It will be hard," he told me last week.

Mayor Karin Marks informed the crowd at the rollout that earlier in the day she had met Quebec municipal affairs minister Nathalie Normandeau and raised the funding question. Chagnon was with her. The response was along the lines that the department had requests for projects worth about \$2 billion while available funds were something like \$300 million.

Westmount is going to need a heck of a sales pitch and be heard without the resentment that our name routinely attracts.

Unthinkable on our own?

Suppose, in an unthinkable worst case, we get no federal or provincial funds and are left on our own. How much could we absorb?

What are the parameters? What will be the effect of each \$10 million on the average tax bill? We should have known this from the start. It should have been debated last summer.

Information provided for the launch was far, far from the package promised. It was scheduled to be delivered door-to-door last week. Council now suggests that it will be delayed until a third public meeting is held late in May.

On the other hand, the new delay allows more time before the Ipsos-Reid pollsters begin their questioning. With so many basics still unknown, there is a chance later responses could give better informed answers.

The planned poll of 800 people was praised by experts for the likely accuracy of the results. But, if those being questioned have only an anecdotal knowledge, it will be worthless. Westmounters are ca-

pable of assessing complex issues. Here is one that impacts their taxes, property values and amenities.

Such a major project deserves a major open debate, at least a "town hall" style meeting where ideas can be presented. Not everyone can blog yet or even use a computer, as envisaged by Mayor Marks and as set up on the city's website. Now council has delayed the polling by about a month, so there is still time.

The mayor is anxious to repeat the format of the April 2008 think tank in Victoria Hall. Then, small groups of citizens sat with city staff at multiple tables each with defined topics. City employees made reports.

Residents certainly produced some creative suggestions. But they were not audited by all participants, or even heard by those at other tables. They were like closed-door meetings in a public place.

Mayor Marks argues that more people became involved, particularly those not normally seen at city meetings. However, I can't help remembering how many such "new" people stepped forward on the arti-

ficial turf issue at its town-hall style meetings arguing for, against and suggesting alternatives.

Ironically, at last week's council meeting, the mayor again committed to the city's participation in the open hearings on the Turcot renovations currently being prepared by the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement (BAPE) for the provincial government.

Surely, when we go, cap in hand, to make a pitch for arena funds, it will strengthen our case that we had our version of a BAPE consultation and the community came together under similar rules to form a common position.

Citizen activist Don Wedge's e-mail address is dwedge@sympatico.ca.

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WMA calls for changes to consultation process on arena

The board of the Westmount Municipal Association (WMA) issued a press release on April 9 calling for at least one single-meeting information session on the arena/pool project. The current format for the three information sessions calls for attendees to break out into smaller, round-table discussion groups.

The board thanked Mayor Karin Marks and the city council for the proposed arena plans, but also voiced concerns over "transparency and provision of opportunities for Westmount citizens to ask questions." The WMA has previously spoken out on a similar issue in a letter to Mayor Marks and council (see "WMA calls for

arena consultation", March 24, p. 1)

Specifically, the board requested that:

- the third, mid-May public information session consist of a single meeting, moderated by an independent chairman,
- the city website provide a forum for arena discussions with postings viewable by all,
- questions to be asked in the post-meetings telephone poll be published as soon as possible and the proposed questions be on the agenda of the third public information meeting.

The comments echo the question asked to council on April 6 by Melville Ave. resident Marilynn Gillies (see p. 8).

Heidi Hollinger to speak at Women's Canadian Club



Westmounter Heidi Hollinger will be speaking about her photography career at the annual Spring luncheon of the Women's Canadian Club of Montreal on April 21. The event will be held at the St. James Club. Tickets are \$55 for the general public

sieur Poutine, vous permettez? She has also published *The Russians Emerge* (in English), *Les Russes* (bilingual) and *Heidi chez les Soviets* (French), as well as a book on Quebec golf courses and books published in Russia.

Hollinger currently maintains a portrait studio near the Atwater Market and is working on a French-language travel show, to appear on TV in 2010.

Turcot study in English online

A summary in English of the environmental impact study for the Turcot Complex renovations has been posted on the BAPE (Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement) web site. The report is available at <http://tinyurl.com/indie-turcot>.

Council intervenes in resident's request for parks survey info

City council appeared open to a resident's request for information related to ongoing research into a two-year Fauteux survey of Westmount's parks and green spaces that had been denied to him by the city.

Patrick Barnard said he had made the request a month ago under access to information laws. He had received a letter of refusal from the city clerk April 6, which denied the information because the study was still preliminary.

He reminded council he had been asking for the information for a year. Considering taxpayers were paying a consultant \$100,000 in 2009 and 2010, he believed it was in the public's interest to obtain some information or photos on the progress being made.

Appearing somewhat surprised that the request was denied, Mayor Karin Marks

pointed out that council had not yet had a presentation from the consultant because it had been focusing its time on the arena project.

City councillor George Bowser, commissioner of Public Works and Parks, said he had seen a CD of photos related to the project and offered to do what he could to help. Councillor Kathleen Duncan also had reviewed the CD with the Horticultural Advisory Committee (HAC), which she chairs, and felt it was "perfectly reasonable to release it."

The matter was left with council agreeing to look into it.



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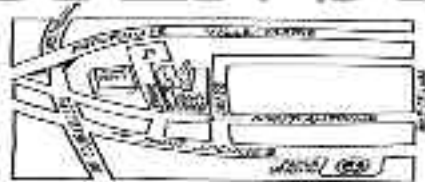
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Gala to raise funds for Linetsky memorial program

A “Night of Stars” gala evening will inaugurate and raise funds for the Jaclyn Linetsky Performing Arts Program at St. George’s School. It is being held on Thursday, April 23 at 6:30 pm at the Just for Laughs Museum (2111 St. Lawrence Blvd.).

The event is being organized by Larry and Terry Linetsky in memory of their daughter Jaclyn.

The teenage actress died in September 2003 in a car accident on the way to the set of her TV show *15/Love*, where she played Megan O’Connor. She had just graduated from St. George’s, where she was class

valedictorian. Jaclyn was best known for role as the English voice of cartoon character Caillou.

“St. George’s provided Jaclyn with a solid education, rich in the arts and a strong support system that encouraged her talent,” said her mother. “Our goal is to offer similar opportunities to other students.”

Additional funds raised will help set up a summer theatre camp, scholarships and a bursary program.

For more details on how to donate or to buy tickets, go to www.anightofstars.com.



Jaclyn Linetsky

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PHASE 3

Mardi 5 mai 2009

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PHASE 3

Tuesday, May 5, 2009

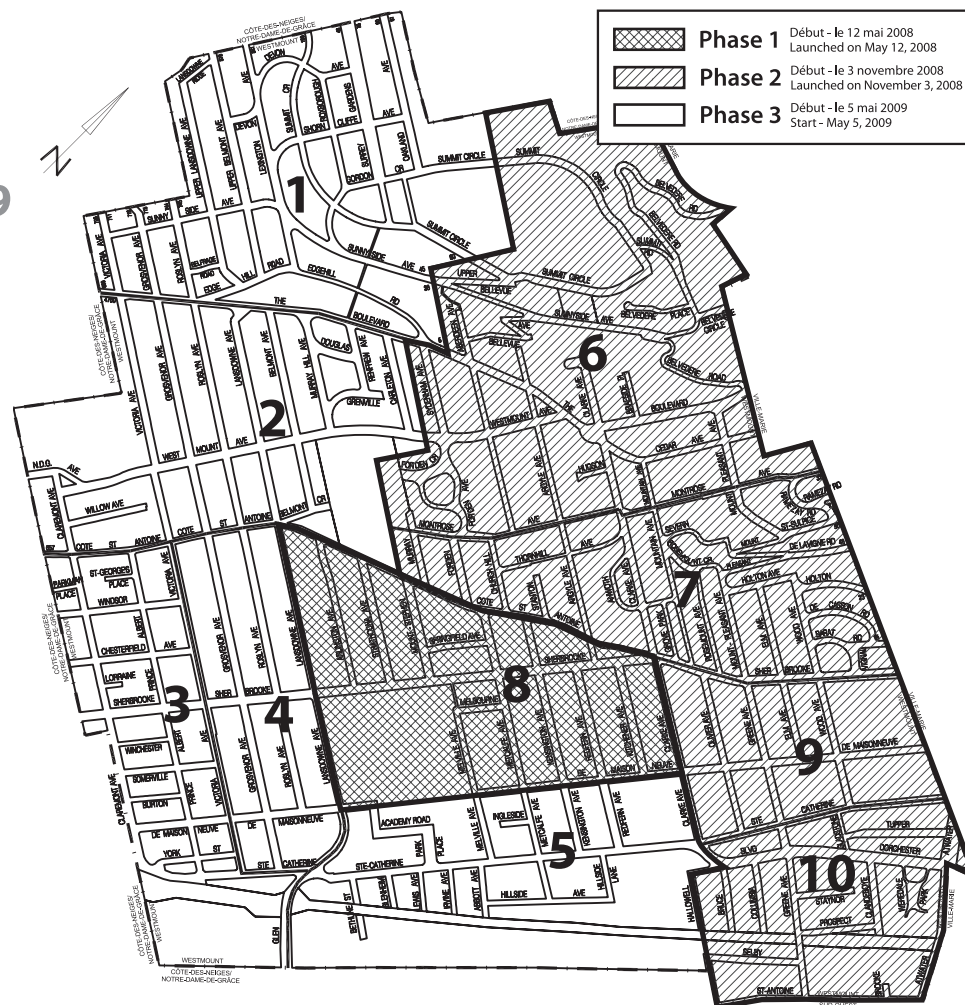
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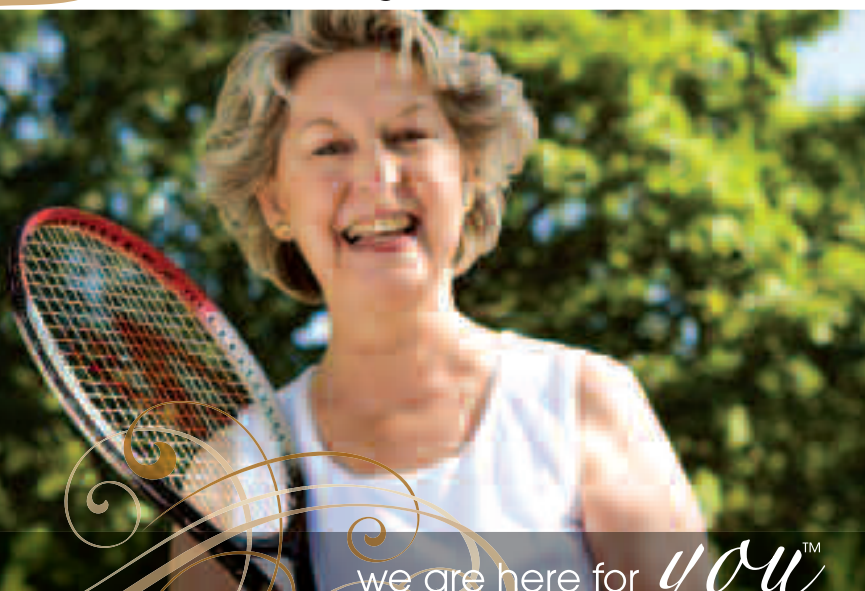
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Residents react to arena plan

continued from p. 1

Leading off the questioners, former city councillor and hockey player Nicolas



Architects Pierre Leclerc and Georges Bulette.

Matossian compared the parking at the proposed arena with parking provisions at Westmount's most-used facility, the Westmount Public Library, across from the busy Westmount Y.

City councillor Kathleen Duncan, commissioner of Library Services, replied that many library users come by foot compared with users of the arena. City councillor Cynthia Lulham also pointed out that the neighbourhood surrounding the arena is already a high-density area that suffers from parking problems.

Claude Brunelle, of Upper Lansdowne, wanted to know "how are you going to finance it?"

"It's difficult to tell you at this point because several pieces are missing," Marks said. She hoped funding would come through government infrastructure grants, private money and taxpayers. The city had applied for the grants, which could cover up to two-thirds of the cost.

The city was compiling models of amounts taxpayers might have to pay given worst, best and anticipated scenarios. "For us, the most important thing is to be shovel-ready so we will have access to grant money when it becomes available," because it might not be offered again.

Hockey player Howard Hoppenheim said the council had done "a magnificent job dealing with all aspects of a project of this magnitude." However, he wanted to know "in the context of a \$30-million project" how much more it would cost to build the second rink to full NHL-size.

Marks said it was not a cost issue but rather site restraints posed by de Maison-neuve to the north, apartment buildings to the east and the dog run to the west. She

said the Sports and Recreation Department found that a second rink of 185 feet was "normal for many municipalities" and considered full size.

In reply to Hoppenheim's question of cost, city councillor Patrick Martin said it would be about \$500,000 more - if the rink fit. Hoppenheim asked that it be looked at again.

Murray Hill resident Tim Anderson said user stats indicated 40 percent of all children in Westmount were enrolled in the department's formal programs while 25 percent of Westmounters had recreation passes. He submitted a petition of some 226 names urging council to move forward with the project. It was an annex to one deposited previously by Jim Stein containing 400 signatures.

Helen McNamara, a mother of arena users, appealed to the council to look into supplementing a telephone poll with some other way of capturing the opinion of those who use the arena. She noted that phone polls typically occur over the supper hour "when most of the mums are at the rink and not available to express their opinions."



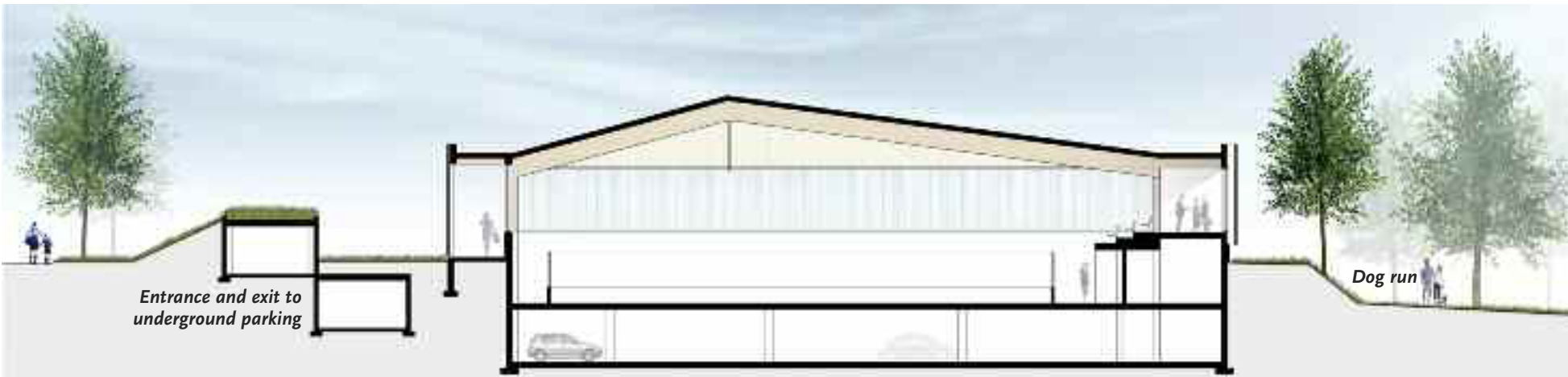
Helen McNamara, mother of arena users.

Marks replied that Ipsos pollsters had proposed a poll of 800 as being more than representative. But McNamara said, "I want to just point out the number is not the issue but the people (being contacted)." She volunteered to help if another way could be found.

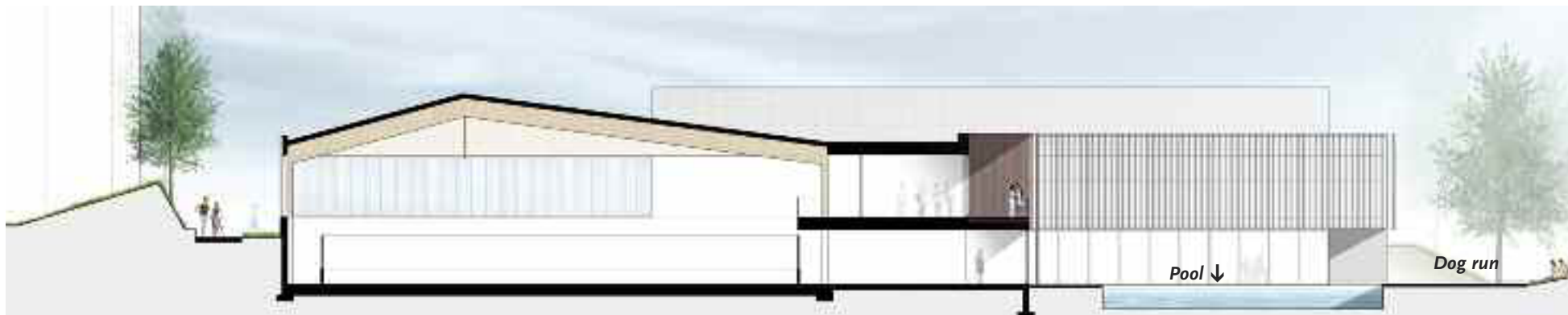
Melville resident Marilyn Gillies asked if the format of the proposed information meetings (April 18, 21 and mid to late May) could be changed from break-out, round-table discussions to one group "where we can all hear the same thing."

Marks defended the concept as being more conducive to dialogue and exchange of ideas among residents. Martin suggested that by having a general presentation before breaking up into smaller groups might ensure that "everyone hears the same thing."

Cut-away views of proposed arena/pool, looking south

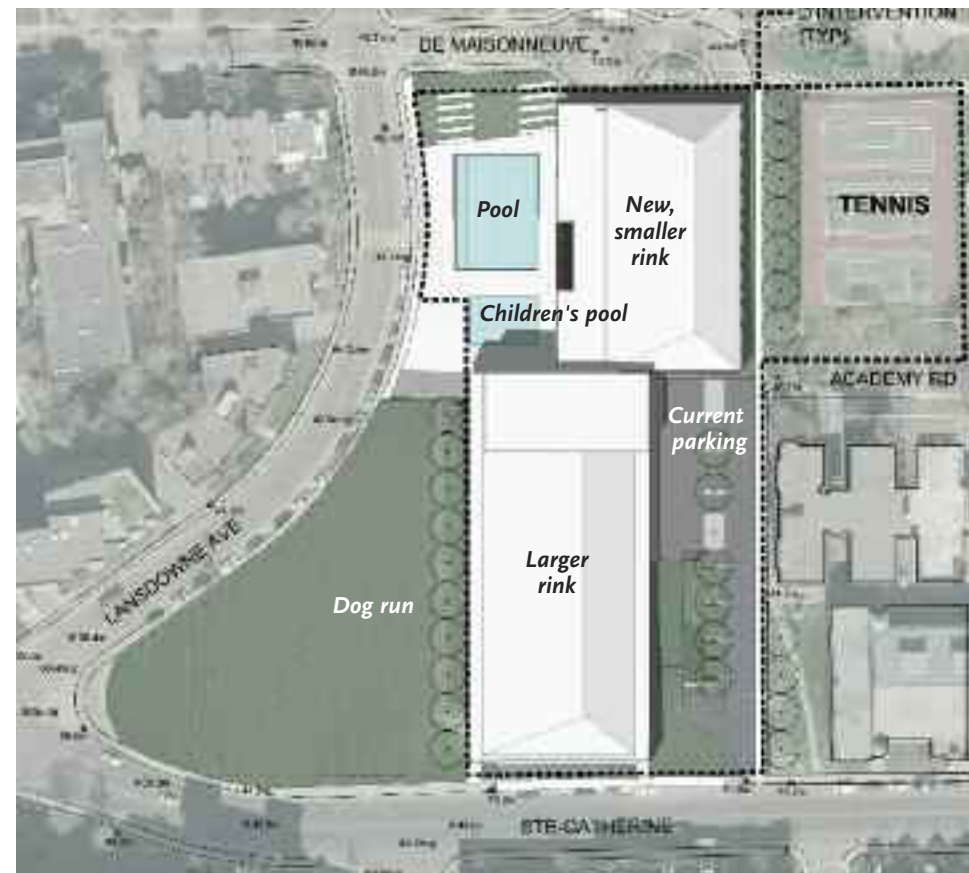


Larger (200-foot by 85-foot) rink and underground parking lot.



Smaller (185-foot by 85-foot) rink at left and pools at right.

Bird's eye view of proposal



What's in it for other interest groups

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Besides hockey and skating, the newly unveiled preliminary design for the new arena/pool facility also impacts other recreational and park activities:

- The plan leaves both the junior tennis court and the dog run unchanged and, according to Mayor Karin Marks, calls for bike racks to be installed at all four entrances, which also will be handicap-accessible. At this point, there are no plans to remove the tennis practice wall.
- While some swimmers have already noticed what appears to be a relatively small deck area surrounding the two pools, the new 25-meter, eight-lane pool, with two one-meter diving boards, could be particularly conducive to swimming laps. The pool will also be deep enough to allow for the use of starting blocks by

swim teams. The pool is 17 meters wide.

- City figures record an average of 41,800 visits to the pool each year, an average of 450 per day. The pool is also home to the Dolphins swim team. The team had a membership of 130 in 2008, compared to 104 two years earlier.
- The second, smaller pool for young children measures 17m x 11m. It will be entirely separate from the larger one rather than simply a roped-off section. Its depth has not yet been announced and is dependent on safety issues and regulations.
- While no news has been announced concerning possible provision for the swimming, skating and hockey programs during construction, "we're working on it," Marks said.
- The roofline of the proposed arena will not exceed that of the existing one.

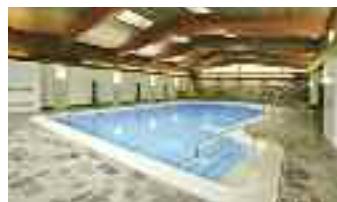
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Vocal ensemble VivaVoce's 10th anniversary concert was showcased by the performance of three of Bach's early cantatas on April 3 at Redpath Hall, followed by birthday cake and bubbly. Among those who attended were, from left, Westmounters Charmian Harvey, member of VivaVoce's Advisory Committee, Duncan McNeill, Peter Schubert, artistic director, chorist Lori Henig and Diana McNeill, also a member of the Advisory Committee.

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ArtNow, last week



Speakers at April 7's ArtNow meeting at the Westmount Library were, from left: Susan Mott (water colourist), Jason Goldsmith (stained glass artist) and Kate Fellerath (photographer). Goldsmith is the founder of Big Blue Hug, a consultancy that uses pictures to communicate with autistic children. He discovered the technique by drawing pictures for his own autistic son, Ellis, who drew pictures in reply.

9 Lives: The adorable Bridget

BY LYZANNE



Bridget, an adorable kitten, is about 6 months old. She has had a rough start in life. During a very cold February day, she appeared out of nowhere at a nice lady's back

door, frantically begging to be let in. This lady noticed that this small and helpless kitten's ears had frostbite and immediately took her in.

Bridget was then fostered by Gerdy's Rescues and received veterinary care (her vaccinations and the operation to get spayed). Her ears are a little different because of damage from the frostbite, but she is now a very healthy kitten.

A true Irish rose, Bridget has an affectionate, playful disposition that makes her a wonderful

addition to any family. If you would like to know more about Bridget, please contact Gerdy on her cell phone at 514.203.9180 or email her at info@gerdysrescue.org.

Many thanks for giving this lovely kitten a chance at adoption.

Your neighbour,
Lyzanne

Artwork by
Laura S. Cohendet



Bridget

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Colourfully Yours: Calgary, carpets and colour

BY GRETA VON SCHMEDLAPP,
MUSE TO AURÉLIEN GUILLORY



My dear design fiends, we must not listen to those Montrealers who think there's no culture in the Prairies! Aurel and I have now explored Calgary three times, and I am pleased to report that there is much more to it than we Easterners thought.

As you might remember, we were there last month for a presentation on methods of creating colour schemes to accentuate various kinds of Persian and other hand-woven carpets. We then returned just recently, and besides visiting surprising shops of Oriental imports, we also visited some art galleries – always an indicator of the people's taste. Several artists exhibiting there are also at our own Galerie de Bellefeuille.

As many of you readers and design people here in Montreal know, we are fortunate to have a good variety of suppliers of

area rugs. In alphabetical order (so no one is insulted!), we have Ararat on Park, Bashir on Decarie, Gito on Notre Dame, Tola on Laurier, Multi-Carpette on Royalmount and Nouraie at Ogilvy's. I'm sure I have forgotten someone, but that's all we have dealt with recently.

Well, in Calgary, the House of Persian Rugs has a huge collection that belies the idea that there are few resources in the West. Their current stock is over 5,000, and is recognized as one of the top in North America, as they are suppliers for all of the West and have been for over 40 years! We met them two years ago and were floored (pardon the pun) to see such a selection.

Now, I really must be frank with you, dear readers. It's not only Calgarians who are timid with selecting colour schemes. Here in cosmopolitan Montreal, we also see many cautious people using the notorious scheme of "beige on beige, with accents of beige." I really do believe Aurel's adage "the right colour is cheaper than the wrong colour" because it costs you when you have to re-paint the wrong one over! Of course, the question often is: How do you find a good colour scheme?

Friends, please use the Persian carpet or your favourite painting as the source of your colours. The carpet is generally the largest and most precious decorative item in the room, so do pay attention to the proportions of the colours to let you create a good system. Sometimes the glorious rose or ruby of the carpet's centre could be a good choice to create a dramatic feeling, or the leafy sage or celadon green to create a soothing one. If you have a carpet called Nain, the soft French or royal blue will provide a rich and elegant atmosphere. Yes, there are often many kinds of

creams, ivories, camels and sandy colours woven in with the stronger colours – use them for the woodwork and large upholstered furniture, and use the stronger colours for smaller chairs, and cushions. White walls are a cop-out – *never ever* for Persians!

I must mention that.....
venerable lighting source *continued on p. 16*



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~ Marty Cooper

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Queen Elizabeth Complex to host 6th Tuscan fundraiser



From left, Tuscan Sun organizers Éleine Lalonde, Brian Marcil, Irene Tschernomor (QEHC Executive Director), Tony Fagnoli of Tony Shoes, David Pickrell of Westmount Florist and Robert Anderson.

The Queen Elizabeth Health Complex will host its 6th annual “Under the Tuscan Sun” wine tasting on Thursday, April 23 from 6 pm to 8 pm at Parisian Laundry (3550 St. Antoine St. West).

Tuscan wines to be sampled include Colline di Toscana 2006, Brunello di Montalcino 2003, Rosso di Montalcino 2006 and Vermentino San Felice 2007. There will also be a silent auction and music by

The Fundamentals.

The funds raised will go toward the purchase of a new, much-needed x-ray machine.

Tickets are \$150 each and are on sale at Tony Shoes (1346 Greene Ave.) and Westmount Florist (360 Victoria Ave.), as well as at the Queen Elizabeth Health Complex by calling 514.485.5018.

Study students inspired by Elizabeth May

continued from p. 3

empowering youth to take action. With about 200 students in attendance, the event attracted a dozen schools from Quebec and Ontario.

Both from Westmount, Bertoia and Magonet have been busy making The Study more environmentally sound by encouraging students to walk or bike to

school, organizing an on-campus composting system and upgrading the school's recycling program. After listening to the Green Party leader discuss floods, famine and other deadly effects global warming has on impoverished nations around the globe, Magonet said May's talk expanded on “exactly the issues we are trying to tackle.”

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Westmount Art Scene

Driven to abstraction: Sokolowski, Provost and Guez

BY HEATHER BLACK

A splotch, a square, a pasted penny! Imaginative play is at the heart of abstract art. But each artist's interpretation is unique, as three Westmount exhibits reveal.

Dominik Sokolowski at Galerie D'Este

Sokolowski combines paint with pasted personal objects – newspaper from his native Poland, a paint chip or clothes peg. “Novembre 13” is a mix of rhythmic sweeps of black, gray and red paint with transparent glazes against a white background. The effect is a musical dance between positive and negative space.

Known for his colourful block-style painting, this Quebec artist creates highly textural works. In “Février 48”, corrugated cardboard and blue-jean denim dominate the composition to create a dense and complex work. The schematic “Février 2” is, on the other hand, quiet and serene.

Resembling a floor plan, the textural grid serves as a template for other works – blue and black blocks in one, or green and yellow in another. The work of a designer, these paintings are variations on a theme, or – like music – improvisations. Sokolowski exhibits at Galerie D'Este from April 18 to May 3.

Jean-François Provost at Galerie de Bellefeuille

Rhythm and repetition also dominate Provost's elegant abstract compositions. A talented colourist, Provost adds a splash of yellow, orange or red to a restrained palette of tans, grays and black. The solid black background of “Plénitude du vide 62” dramatizes the central white and gray motif.

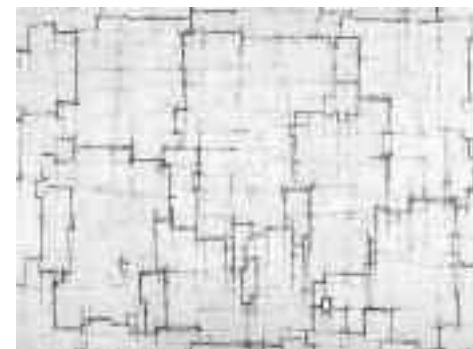
For this artist, less is decidedly more. A quiet paint drip or red squiggle enhances the emotive quality of the paintings. Seemingly spontaneous, the flower-like dabs against a nest brown of “Plénitude du vide, acte 2-3” tease the imagination.

A later variation “Acte 2-10” is exuberant yet restrained, with fine lines and smooth yellows and greens.

A Quebec participant in the 2007 Florence Biennale, Provost exhibits from April 23 to May 4 at Galerie de Bellefeuille.

Nathalie Guez at Victoria Hall

For this Westmounter, a chair is abstract sculpture. An architect, Guez plays with positive and negative space in a three-dimensional form. Her work is minimal-



Dominik Sokolowski “Février 2”

ist, yet complex, combining elegance with wit.

In the “Afro-chaises” series, each of the six black dining room chairs is unique. Decorations—a bone or a chair leg with three anklets—reflect tribal masks and humour. But her chairs also exude a sense of humanity.

“Myrium”, a lounge chair with a large “O” side cushion, a tribute to her mother, suggests comfort and love. Another, the overstuffed red “Asia” also combines the symbolic with function. Guez's chairs are on exhibit until April 21 at Victoria Hall.

In these exhibits, the artists' sense of play prevails. But it is experimentation that confronts and teases the viewer. Challenging existing perceptions of beauty and design, this art is a reminder to look again and find another way.

Colourfully Yours

continued from p. 13

on Greene Ave, AREVCO. I love their solutions for bookshelf and kitchen cabinet lighting. Your room will come alive with illumination on top of a wall unit to bounce light off the ceiling. Cooks will love to see the veggies they are chopping more easily with some thin tube lighting hiding under the top cabinets and illuminating the work surface. After all one does not want to have finger bits left in the sauce! Please ask Greg or Robert to show you the new tiny LED strip lights, or the European dimmable Linestra tubes in 1/3, 1/2 or full meter sizes.

Finally, I must ask you all to please visit my friendly sources mentioned and give me a report, as I'd like to dialogue with all of you out there. I must get out of this chair, and slip into a dry martini!

Hugs, your Greta Von Schmedlapp.

*Keep those comments coming to
aurelien@colorsbyaurelien.com*

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Councillor Martin 'bothered' by multi attendees to faraway conferences

continued from p. 1

did not, by law, have to be declared.

Martin said he had been bothered that the four people were being sent so far

away at the same time – especially given that some of Lulham's expenses were already covered by other sources in her capacity as a speaker.

Now that the amount was amended, he

would vote for the resolution.

City councillor Tom Thompson, who chairs the Finance and Administration committee, said he thought \$9,100 was reasonable considering the councillors were giving up their time to attend and "these people aren't going to a party."

Others supported his belief that the FCM conference provides an excellent opportunity for networking, and picking up newest and best practices from other municipalities and the accompanying Municipal Expo, a trade show.

At such a sizeable conference that attracts 2,000 to 3,000 people, sending several councillors meant they could attend many different seminars.

In pointing out that Westmount was a founding member of the FCM, Lulham, who is an FCM committee member, explained the organization's value and success as a municipal lobby group. She believed it was important for people to get together to pass motions and bring back information that can be shared with others.

BUILDING PERMITS What's permitted

The following permits were approved at council meetings March 18 and April 6:

70 Rosemount Cres.: to replace windows, modify basement door opening and make exterior repairs;

443 Claremont: to install a fence inside northeast and southeast property lines;

253-257 Melville: to replace front windows;

438-440 Mount Stephen: to modify two openings on north façade;

20 Renfrew: to replace windows and door and to create a new opening on the south façade;

649 Côte St. Antoine: to replace windows at heritage category 1* home;

517 Lansdowne: to build a new solarium in the back yard;

343 Metcalfe: to change windows, front door and garage doors;

1 Belvedere Rd.: to change front door and two windows;

1232 Greene: to install a new sign for Kashima;

601 Roslyn: to replace front and side windows;

563 Lansdowne: to replace side and rear windows as well as garage door;

462 Strathcona: to change front and side windows;

436 Wood: to replace rear window.

Underdog: Deuce

BY FERN BRESLAW

Pitbulls aren't nasty, they're just a little pathetic. They are sensitive souls who get hurt very easily and tend to over-dramatize



Deuce

Photo: Marko Kulik

everything – sort of like teenagers. That's what makes them such good guard dogs, fighters and working dogs; they will do most anything for praise and validation in an attempt to boost their fragile self-esteem.

Enter Deuce. He is a pitbull. He is sensitive. He is insecure. Deuce was recently attacked by another dog, which has left him with big chunks missing out of both his sides. The poor guy didn't even try to fight back; he just lay down and took it. He is very sweet but is becoming quite depressed as nobody wants him or pays much attention to him. He urgently needs a loving home filled with praise and reassurance. Please call 514.969.3367 with any questions or visit Deuce at the Montreal SPCA.

Update: Milly, the puppy mill rescue who disappeared three weeks ago (*Independent*, April 1, p. 16), was found and, thanks to her microchip, is now back home where she belongs. Hooray.

Bon Appetit

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Comin' Up...

FRIDAY, APRIL 17: **Mayor's Blood Donor Clinic** between 2 and 8 pm at Victoria Hall. This year, Westmount's goal is 100 pints of blood. Info: Community Events 514.989.5265.

SATURDAY, APRIL 18: "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere in 1775" featuring a jazz and words reading of Longfellow's poem. Atwater Library at 7:30 pm. Any donations welcome but \$9 or more includes door prizes and refreshments. Info: byrontoben@videotron.ca

SATURDAY, APRIL 18: "Empty Bowls" fundraiser at Unitarian Church of Montreal (5035 de Maisonneuve, corner Claremont) from 11 am to 2 pm. Share a community meal to raise awareness of the fight against hunger in Montreal. At door, tickets \$20 (includes, soup, bread, fruit and bowl to keep); \$5 for lunch only; free for children age 5 and under. All proceeds go to hunger-fighting organizations. www.emptybowlsmontreal.org

SATURDAY, APRIL 18: **Public information meeting on the arena/pool project** at 12 noon at Victoria Hall. The second session is Tuesday, April 21 at 7 pm at Victoria Hall. The same presentation will be made at both meetings. Info: www.westmount.org, click on Recreation and Culture.

MONDAY, APRIL 20: Marianopolis College's (4873 Westmount Ave.) free week-long **arts and culture celebration** starts today and ends April 24. Features music recitals, readings, film screenings, a play and art exhibitions by students and staff. www.marianopolis.edu/artsfest and marianopolis.edu/artsfestconcert.

MONDAY, APRIL 20: Preview of the 2009 **Blue Metropolis** Montreal International Literary Festival (April 22-26) by Linda Leith, founder and artistic director. Atwater Library at 12:30 pm. Free.

TUESDAY, APRIL 21: The Women's Canadian Club of Montreal's annual Spring luncheon with guest speaker and Westmounter **Heidi Hollinger**, international portrait photographer. St. James Club (1145 Union Ave.) at 11:30 am. \$50, regular; \$55, non-members. 514.489.0975.

TUESDAY, APRIL 21: **Public information meeting on the arena/pool project** at 7 pm at Victoria Hall. The same presentation will be made at the April 18 and 21 meetings. Info: www.westmount.org, click on Recreation and Culture.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22: Westmount **Healthy City Project** Tree Walk for Earth Day, 4 to 6 pm. Guide Bronwyn Chester. Assembling Westmount Park, Library entrance. Free. All welcome. Rain or shine.

SATURDAY, APRIL 25: **Spring book sale** at the Westmount Public Library April 25 and 26 between 10 am and 5 pm. Donations of books in good condition can be dropped off at the front desk anytime before the sale, or pick-ups can be arranged. Info: Friends of the Westmount Public Library, Carolyn O'Neill at 514.483.5604.

SATURDAY, APRIL 25: The **Orpheus Singers** under the direction of Peter Schubert, present "Dolor et Gaudium," a concert of Renaissance music for Holy Week and Easter, featuring works by Gesualdo, Tallis et Lassus. 8 pm at St. Matthias' Church, Reserve: 514.846.8464.

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OPEN HOUSE SUN 2-4

1 SEVERN – LOCATION! The perfect condo alternative situated on a quiet street in mid-level Westmount! Completely renovated from A-Z, this sunny 3+1 bedroom home is perfect for the couple who loves entertaining! With 2 garages, 2 terraces, a/c and top of the line appliances this home is not to be missed! **Now asking \$1,198,000.**



ROSLYN: Completely renovated 3-storey, 3+1 bedroom home loaded w/country charm! From the exposed brick, brand new kitchen leading onto a private deck and garden with Jacuzzi, Mexican oak floors, fireplace, large master w/ensuite, finished bsmt & 3-4 car prkg, this home is one-of-a-kind! **Asking \$1,095,000**



4-6 WINDSOR: Opportunity! Unique Victorian duplex (was/can be cottage) situated on a bright corner steps from Victoria Village! One visit to this second-empire dwelling and you will see the potential! 2-car parking, 2 entrances, semi-finished basement, tons of detailing and improvements throughout, this property is awaiting your special touch! **Asking \$799,000.**



VICTORIA: Impeccable and sun-filled 2+2 bdrm ground floor condo w/ approx. 2,700 sq.ft. Of wonderful living space & exclusive use of the lovely backyard. W/central air, central vac, oak floors, tons of improvements & integ. Garage; this condo feels like a home & is steps from everything! **Asking \$639,000.**



ST. HUBERT (PLATEAU) WOW! The most unique condo to hit the plateau! Approx. 1,978 sq.ft. 2-storey, 3 bedroom, completely renovated condo with a/c! The 750sq.ft. rooftop terrace with whirlpool, bar and shower is ready for entertaining on a grand scale! One look at this condo and you will be impressed! Steps from Mount-Royal, this is a one-of-a-kind opportunity! **Asking \$569,000.**



ST. HUBERT – Lovely and charming 2 bdrm renovated top floor condo with views of Mount Royal! Enjoy the open concept granite kitchen with large island, sun-filled double living room with wood fireplace, 2 balconies, rights to rooftop for a terrace, beautiful columns/mouldings and garage! This condo will surely impress! **Asking \$449,000**



BEACONSFIELD – (Monkland village-NDG). Lovely ground floor 1,305 sf, (including bsmt) 2+1 bedroom condo steps from Monkland village! With its renovated kitchen, bath and finished basement, fireplace, wall-mounted a/c unit, rear garden off kitchen and the possibility of parking, this condo is not to be missed! **Asking \$339,000.**



CHRISTOPHE-COLOMB – Wonderfully bright 2-level 1+1 bedroom condo on top floor of 3-storey building! With parking, fireplace, 2 skylights, mezzanine and fabulous private garden terrace with north-east views to entertain guests, have a quiet retreat or walk to any restaurant/shop on trendy Mt Royal! In the heart of Plateau near metro, parc Lafontaine, Laurier ++ **Asking \$295,000.**

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